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# THE GENERAL STAFF

BY L. AMES BROWN

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As the days pass it becomes constantly more apparent at Washington that responsibility for the actual military conduct of the war will devolve very largely on the General Staff. The President has made clear on more than one occasion his conviction that modern warfare is no business for amateurs, and that in all questions of policy of a scientific or specialized nature he intended to seek and follow the guidance of men whose training and type of mind have best qualified them to determine the course the nation should follow. One of the most striking instances was his statement declining Colonel Roosevelt's offer to take a volunteer force to France, in which he asserted in effect that the business in hand was too highly specialized to permit room for any but professionally trained participants.

The one outstanding exception to his policy of following the lead of the General Staff on military matters served to emphasize, through the deliberation with which it was decided and the attention it attracted, the settled character of the President's determination. The General Staff was opposed to the proposal to send troops to France immediately, basing their view on well-considered reasons of a strictly military character, the chief one being the almost negligible military value of a small American expeditionary force and its relatively larger usefulness in the United States as a nucleus for the new national army soon to be trained. The Allies, and particularly so great an authority as Marshal Joffre, knowing conditions on the Western Front, contended that the admitted military reasons for withholding American troops at the present time would be outweighed by the tremendous moral value of the arrival in France of

a tangible evidence of American aid. The Marshal of France was determinedly upheld in the matter by Mr. Balfour, and after the most thorough deliberation, in itself the best evidence of the weight which the President intends to attach to the word of his military advisers, Mr. Wilson overruled the General Staff, subordinated military strategy to diplomatic policy, and permitted the great French General to have his wish. It may be noted even here, however, that the General Staff was not unanimous in its recommendations, and that before the President's final decision was announced some of the opponents of the expeditionary force had been won over.

So much for the President's attitude toward the General Staff and his confidence in their judgment on military matters. Just what is the character of the professional organization on which the President and his Secretary of War will rely for their guidance in military strategy and policy?

The General Staff is composed of five men. Major General Hugh L. Scott is the Chief of Staff. Next in order comes Major General Tasker H. Bliss, Assistant to the Chief of Staff and at present Acting Chief of Staff; then Brigadier General Joseph E. Kuhn, President of the War College; Major General Erasmus M. Weaver, Jr., Chief of the Coast Artillery, and Brigadier General William A. Mann, Chief of the Militia Bureau. Each of these men has had a brilliant career and has been appointed to his present position because of high merit. Working with them as assistants is a list of subordinate officers, also trained soldiers and competent to lead. This list includes:

#### COLONELS

*Infantry*:—William H. Johnston, William F. Martin, Munroe McFarland, William S. Graves, Francis E. Lacey, Jr.

*Cavalry*:—Robert E. L. Michie, Malvern-Hill Barnum, P. D. Lochridge, Robert L. Howze.

*Field Artillery*:—Ernest Hinds.

*Coast Artillery*:—Frank W. Coe.

#### LIEUTENANT-COLONELS

*Infantry*:—H. A. Smith, Palmer E. Pierce, Ralph H. Van Deman, John McA. Palmer, Frank S. Cocheu, Oliver Edwards, Briant H. Wells.

*Cavalry*:—J. G. Harbord.

*Field Artillery*:—D. T. Moore.

*Coast Artillery*:—Robert E. Callan, Andrew Moses, George A. Nugent.

### MAJORS

*Infantry*:—George H. Shelton, Merch B. Stewart, Dennis E. Nolan, George S. Goodale, Edgar T. Collins, Monroe C. Kerth, Alfred W. Bjornstadt, Tenney Ross, Ezekiel J. Williams, Dana T. Merrill, Arthur L. Conger, Hugh A. Drum, Wm. H. Fassett.

*Cavalry*:—Walter C. Babcock, Francis LeJ. Parker, Edward L. King, Malin Craig, Ewing E. Booth, Roger S. Fitch.

*Field Artillery*:—Daniel F. Craig, Edward H. DeArmond, Nelson E. Margetts, Leslie J. McNair, William Bryden.

*Coast Artillery*:—Stanley D. Embick, Charles E. Kilbourne, John W. Gulick, William H. Raymond, Henry C. Merriam.

*Engineers*:—Douglas MacArthur, John J. Kingman.

### CAPTAINS

*Infantry*:—W. N. Hughes, Jr., R. I. Ross, A. J. Greer, Constant Cordier, W. R. Standiford, Frederick S. Young, L. D. Gasser, W. A. Castle, A. O. Seaman, T. W. Brown, F. W. Brabson, G. C. Marshall Jr., C. K. Mason, G. A. Lynch, Campbell B. Hodges, T. W. Hammond.

*Cavalry*:—Harry N. Cootes, George T. Bowman, Walter S. Grant, Samuel R. Gleaves, William O. Reed, Alexander B. Coxe, George P. Tyner.

*Field Artillery*:—Sherman Miles, Fred T. Cruse, Roger S. Parrott, Franz A. Doniat.

*Coast Artillery*:—F. T. Hines, Francis W. Clark, A. A. Maybach, G. E. T. Lull, C. L. Fenton, G. A. Wildrick.

*Engineers*:—Creswell Garlington.

General Scott, a Kentuckian by birth, graduated thirty-sixth in his class at West Point. During the years 1899 and 1900 he served as Assistant Adjutant-General of the Department of Havana under General Ludlow. He then became Assistant Adjutant-General of the Division of Cuba, becoming in August, 1900, Adjutant-General of the Division, and later in the year, when the Division was changed to the Department of Cuba, General Scott retained his position of Adjutant-General. He served in this capacity until 1903, working under Major-General Leonard Wood, the present ranking officer, who was then Military Governor of Cuba. During this time, he took part in turning over the govern-

ment of the island to the Cubans. From September, 1903, until July, 1906, he was Governor, Sulu Archipelago and Commander of Post Jolo. His chief accomplishment during this period was the abrogation of slavery in the Archipelago.

He became Superintendent of the United States Military Academy August 31, 1906, and continued in this office until he was appointed to the General Staff in April, 1914. Seven months later he became Chief of Staff. He has had the honorary degree of L.H.B. conferred upon him by Princeton, and was made a Doctor of Laws by Columbia University. His appointment to a Brigadier-Generalship came March 25, 1913, and on April 30, 1915, he reached the highest position attainable under our military system, the office of Major-General.

General Scott is known in army circles as the "Pacifist General." A great part of his military career has been spent among the Indians. A natural attachment arose between him and members of the various tribes, and from them he learned their language. When the Utes went on the war-path several years ago, the Department of Interior borrowed General Scott and sent him to Utah to quell the disturbance. Instead of waging war against them, he secured their confidence, and the uprising ended when he sat on the ground with several of their chiefs and smoked the pipe of peace.

In 1913 there was another Indian uprising. The Navajos, admonished against polygamy, threatened to go on the war-path. General Scott was again sent West. He decided to quiet the redskins single-handed. He left his troops and rode alone and unarmed into the Navajo camp. The Indians were hostile but so surprised that not a hand was raised against him. After he had talked to them for a few hours, he convinced them of the Nation's beneficent attitude toward them. When he left camp, he was escorted to his own regiment by a group of elderly chieftains.

But General Scott is more than a pacifist. When the occasion arose while he was governor of a province in the Philippines, he started in pursuit of one of the wildest and most barbarous Moro leaders. His expeditionary force surprised the enemy and surrounded them, but, before the engagement ended, a hand-to-hand conflict ensued. During its progress, three of the fingers on the General's left hand were cut off by the blade of one of the Moros.

Tasker H. Bliss was born in Pennsylvania. He grad-

uated eighth in his class from the Military Academy and later became Chief of the Cuban Customs Service and Collector of Customs of the Port of Havana. He held this position from January, 1899, until May, 1902. During this service he acted as President of the Commission to revise the Cuban tariff. The work of this board was successfully finished in 1901. July 21, 1902, he was promoted to the position of Brigadier-General and was assigned to serve as a member of the War College Board. When the question of reciprocity with Cuba arose, General Bliss was appointed a special envoy to negotiate the treaty. Four months before this work was finished in December, 1903, he was appointed a member of the General Staff.

For two years he served as Chief of the third Division of the General Staff and President of the Army War College and, in June, 1905, he was ordered to the Philippine Islands to take command of the Department of Luzon. In January of the following year he was placed in charge of the Department of Mindanao and was appointed Governor of the Moro Province. December, 1908, while still acting in that capacity he became Commander of the Philippine Division, but in April, 1909, he relinquished both of these positions. After a couple of months of travel in China and Manchuria, he returned to the United States and resumed his position as a member of the General Staff and as President of the Army War College. Shortly after arriving in this country, the maneouvers in Massachusetts took place and General Bliss gained new distinction for the successful manner in which he directed the "Red Army."

General Bliss is of a scientific turn of mind. His chief interest has been centered in constructive affairs and, while a capable leader and well versed in military strategy, he is chiefly noted as an engineer.

In addition to being a trained soldier, General Kuhn is an expert engineer. He was appointed to West Point from his native state, Kansas, and was graduated in 1888. Eight years later he entered the office of the chief of Engineers at Washington, becoming one year later Assistant to the Chief. He served with Company M, third battalion of Engineers in the Philippines from October, 1903, to March, 1904, when he became Military Attaché at the United States Legation at Tokio. His duty there was to observe the operations of the Japanese army during the war with Russia. On April 23,

1904, he was given the rank of Major of the Corps of Engineers. He served in the office of the Chief of Staff from December, 1905, until June, 1906. Five months later he took charge of the fortification work and the River and Harbor Improvements at Norfolk, Virginia. He was made a Lieutenant Colonel of the Corps of Engineers on October 16, 1909. At this time he was on duty at the Army Service Schools at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and he remained at this post for three years. After one year spent in performance of engineer duty at Philadelphia, he was then placed in command of the Washington Barracks. From November 25, 1914, until December 5, 1916, when relations between this country and the Central Powers became very much estranged, General Kuhn was an official observer of the German Armies. Recently he was appointed President of the War College. His rise in rank has been very rapid, his appointment as Colonel coming March 12, 1915, and as Brigadier-General, January 2, 1917.

The keynote to General Kuhn's character is enthusiasm. Vigorous and rugged, he plunges into every task assigned to him with the greatest ardor. He was graduated first in his class at West Point and, according to his classmate, General McIntyre, Chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs, he was probably the most popular man in the Academy at the time.

Erasmus Morgan Weaver, Jr., was born in Indiana. He graduated fourteenth in his class at West Point. In April and May, 1899, he was Chief Mustering Officer in Massachusetts. For one year after that, he was in command of the defenses at Galveston, Texas. He then spent three years as an instructor in charge of the Department of Artillery, Chemistry, and Explosives at the Artillery School at Fortress Monroe. In 1903 he was made a Major of the Artillery Corps. He also served as a member of the Board of Ordnance and Fortification and as a member of the Board of Revision of Coast Artillery Drill Regulations in 1903. From 1904 until 1906 he was Artillery Inspector of the Atlantic Division, and from 1906 until 1908 he was Senior Assistant to the Chief of Artillery. He became an officer of the General Staff in June, 1905, and held this position, in addition to his other duties, until 1908. He was appointed Lieutenant Colonel at this time and was made Chief of the Division of Militia Officers in the Office of the Secretary of

War. A year later he was appointed Colonel. In 1911 he was assigned to duty as Chief of the Coast Artillery and an additional member of the General Staff, his appointment as Brigadier General coming at this time. He has remained in this position until the present, receiving one more promotion, to the rank of Major General, in 1916. His work on various boards has proved of exceptional advantage to the War Department.

General William A. Mann was appointed to the Military Academy from Pennsylvania. After the War with Spain, he was made Acting Adjutant General of Visayas Military District at Iloila, Island of Panay. During that time he took part in a number of engagements with insurgents. In 1900 he was made Inspector General of the Department of Visayas and Supervisor of Internal Revenue. July 1, 1901, he was advanced to the position of Major. In 1902, he served as a member of the Board for the revision of Firing Regulations and the following year found him on duty in the Adjutant General's office. In 1904, he was made Chief of Staff of the Department of Visayas, Philippines, and the next year he was on duty at the Army War College. In 1906 and 1907, he was in Cuba as Assistant to the Chief of Staff of the Expedition to that Island, and in 1907 he was made Chief of Staff of the Army of Cuban Pacification. In 1908, simultaneously with his appointment to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, he was placed in command of Fort William Harrison, Montana. In May, 1909, he was again transferred, this time being placed in command of the Recruit Depot at Columbus Barracks, Ohio. From 1911 until 1913, he served as Chief of Staff of the Eastern Division and Eastern Department at Governor's Island, New York, and the following year as Chief of Staff of the Central Department and Second Division at Texas City, Texas. In 1915, he was placed in command of the First Brigade, First Division at Albany, New York; in 1916 he commanded the post at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and the School of Fire for Field Artillery, and from November, 1916, until the present, he has been Chief of the Militia Bureau. In May of this year, when he was made a Brigadier General, he became a member of the Staff.

General Scott is at present in Russia with the Root mission. Perhaps it was a tribute to his long years of service that President Wilson paid in giving him this commission; but possibly there is basis for the statement that the Presi-



dent had something more in mind. General Scott is not, by any means, a young man, and it is not idle to suspect that in sending him abroad, the President had no misgivings because of the entailed necessity of placing additional responsibilities upon the shoulders of younger men.

General Bliss is now the acting Chief of Staff. In case General Scott is relieved of his duties, either General Bliss or General Kuhn will probably be made the actual head of the General Staff. Although he has not yet been made a Major General, Kuhn is probably more frequently discussed as Scott's successor than any other man. He is not as experienced, in point of years in service, as the Acting Chief, but his brilliance has made him, perhaps, the most admired man on the Staff.

Outside of these five men, furthermore, there are several officers who stand out somewhat above their fellows, notably Adjutant-General H. P. McCain, who has made a splendid reputation for efficiency in his office and Brigadier General William Crozier, Chief of Ordnance, an inventive genius as well as an officer of remarkable ability; and among the men now away from Washington, Major General John F. Morrison, now Commanding General of the Philippines and Major-General Hunter Liggett. General Liggett has been President of the War College, Commanding General of the Philippines, and is now Commanding General of the Western Department, with headquarters at San Francisco. He is a man who combines a strong personality with ability of the first order. General Morrison was for six years head of the Department of Military Art at the Army Service School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where he revolutionized the method of instruction. He is perhaps the first authority in the army in strategy and tactics.

These are, of course, only a few of the men whom the war may shove into prominence, but their ability shows plainly enough the reserve on which the demands of the struggle may draw. The brilliant younger officers of the Staff Corps—Bjornstadt and his associates—assuredly have high destinies before them.

General McCain was born in Mississippi and graduated from West Point in 1895. In 1899, he became Professor of Military Tactics at Louisiana University. In 1891, he was transferred to service with the 14th Infantry, and in 1896 became Adjutant of that Corps. Two years later he was

sent to the District of Lynn Canal, Alaska, as Assistant Adjutant General. Later in the year he was again transferred, serving in Cavite and Manila during the Spanish War. After serving in various positions for only a few months at a time, he was made in 1900, a Major, and became Assistant Adjutant General in Washington. He served in this capacity, receiving a promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in the meantime, until 1903, when he was detailed to the General Staff and was made Chief of Staff of the Department of Mindanao. One year later he was again promoted and returned to his former position, Assistant Adjutant General in Washington. He continued at this post until 1912 when he became Adjutant-General of the Philippine Islands. The following year he returned to Washington as Acting Adjutant-General and in 1914, with his promotion to the rank of Brigadier-General, he was appointed Adjutant-General. His rise was the result of steady and proficient application in a specialized field. His service at his present post has been invaluable. It is due to his efficient conduct of his office that much of the red tape formerly connected with the War Department, has been done away with.

Another officer whose work brings him into intimate contact with the General Staff is the Chief of Ordnance, Brigadier General William Crozier. General Crozier has had much experience in ordnance work and is particularly fitted for his post. He first came into prominence as a delegate to the International Peace Conference at the Hague in 1899. Before returning to the United States, he was commissioned to investigate the ordnance service in various countries in Europe. After arriving in America he was stationed in the office of the Chief of Ordnance in Washington, and, in 1900, he went to Manila as a special ordnance officer with the troops in the field in the campaign against insurgents in southern Luzon. He was attached to the staffs of General J. C. Bates, commanding the First Division of the Eighth Army Corps, and of General Theodore Schwan, commanding the Second Brigade of that Division.

Subsequently he became Chief of Ordnance of the Philippines but in July, 1900, he accompanied the Chief Ordnance officer of the Pekin relief expedition. While in this position he was present at several important engagements, among them the battle at Pietsang, August 5, the battle at Yangtsun, August 6, and the more deathly conflicts at Pekin, August

14 and 15. Upon his return to America, he inspected and tried the armament of the Pacific Coast fortifications. He then resumed his position as Assistant to the Chief of Ordnance in Washington, and on December 22, 1901, he was made Chief of Ordnance. He has held this position ever since.

Doubtless the progress of the war will see the American General Staff undergo some changes in organization, as well as in personnel. It would indeed be strange, in a war which has revolutionized the armies of the Allies, if the exigencies of the struggle did not exert a directing influence on the development of the body which must control America's armies. It would be most unfortunate for the nation if the composition of that body did not prove elastic enough to adapt itself to the changing conditions. One of the spokesmen of the French mission remarked on their recent visit that modern war was constant change, a continual branching out in new directions and new fields, and the people who would be victorious must be an ever-watchful people, always ready to meet the unexpected turn. Granting this premise, and remembering that the United States is entering the greatest war of history with a military organization and military leaders alike untried by any but negligible experience in actual fighting, it is to be expected that the end of the war will find a military system developed and altered by experience and directed in some measure by new leaders whom the war itself has brought to the front.

Acknowledging the probability of such changes, however, which the war has produced in nations of far more military experience than the United States during the last two years, it is a matter for profound congratulation that the American General Staff system is founded as a whole on sound principles in accord with the experience of Europe.

Under the terms of the act establishing the Staff Corps the officers who compose the organization are assigned to staff duty for periods of only four years. It is not detracting from the admirable features of the system to point out that this is a weakness which should be corrected at the earliest opportunity. Under modern conditions, where warfare has become so highly specialized a science, to give an officer only four years in which to master and put to use the administrative detail essential to his success as a staff officer is wasteful and obsolete.

A really scientific reorganization along the most approved modern lines would demand the creation of a permanent General Staff Corps, with a carefully worked out system of training for the officers who are to become members, just as a specialized education is given the officer who is to go into the engineering or the signal corps. Expressed in ordinary terms, the work of the General Staff is little else than the business like administration of the country's military forces. It is a duty which calls for special qualifications in the officers just as particular characteristics are demanded of the successful business executive.

Further than that the capable staff officer must have thorough experience in the administration of his duties before he can really develop his natural talents to the point where they will be of the most effective use. Four years for both learning the job and applying the knowledge in its effective administration is all too short a period. The staff position should be made the objective and the opportunity for a life work, with provision for the preliminary training necessary to introduce the young officer into his duties of administration and military research under the most favorable auspices. It is only necessary to compare the four-year plan with the years of training and experience demanded for fitting a big business executive in order to understand the principle involved. Under the present arrangement the staff officer has only attained his full knowledge of the administrative work and his full efficiency when he is liable to be sent back to field work.

It must be remembered, however, that the system undoubtedly works out far better in practice than it promises theoretically. The ready adaptability of the American character enables the officer to fit into a new place more quickly and effectively than the outlook might seem to promise. Yet the failure of the authorities to press home the necessity of recognizing the essential character of the staff position as an administrative job requiring special qualifications and training and especial soldierly qualities has undoubtedly been a serious oversight. It is a tribute to the high character and ability of the men who have composed and now make up the General Staff that this weakness has not been more dangerous.

The point to remember is that no matter what comparatively slight errors may and inevitably will develop during

the first few months of the war, or what criticism may from time to time be justified, the character of the Staff organization as a whole, although untried in actual warfare, is such as to arouse confidence, and there should be no wholesale condemnation of the General Staff until thorough investigation has proved it deserved. The body is so organized that the President can remove any proved incompetent at will, and the war can be depended to force its own readjustments.

The system, with the one fault already mentioned, is properly constituted. There is every reason to expect devoted and able service from the men now at its head, but if any one of them fails under the test, the country has the assurance that the General Staff Corps has the elasticity and adaptability and the resources of younger men to make his replacement certain. We may assume from all we know that the leadership of the General Staff is adequate, although still untried. The war itself must be the final arbiter.

L. AMES BROWN.



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MAJOR-GENERAL TASKER H. BLISS, U. S. A.





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**BRIGADIER-GENERAL JOSEPH E. KUHN, U. S. A.**





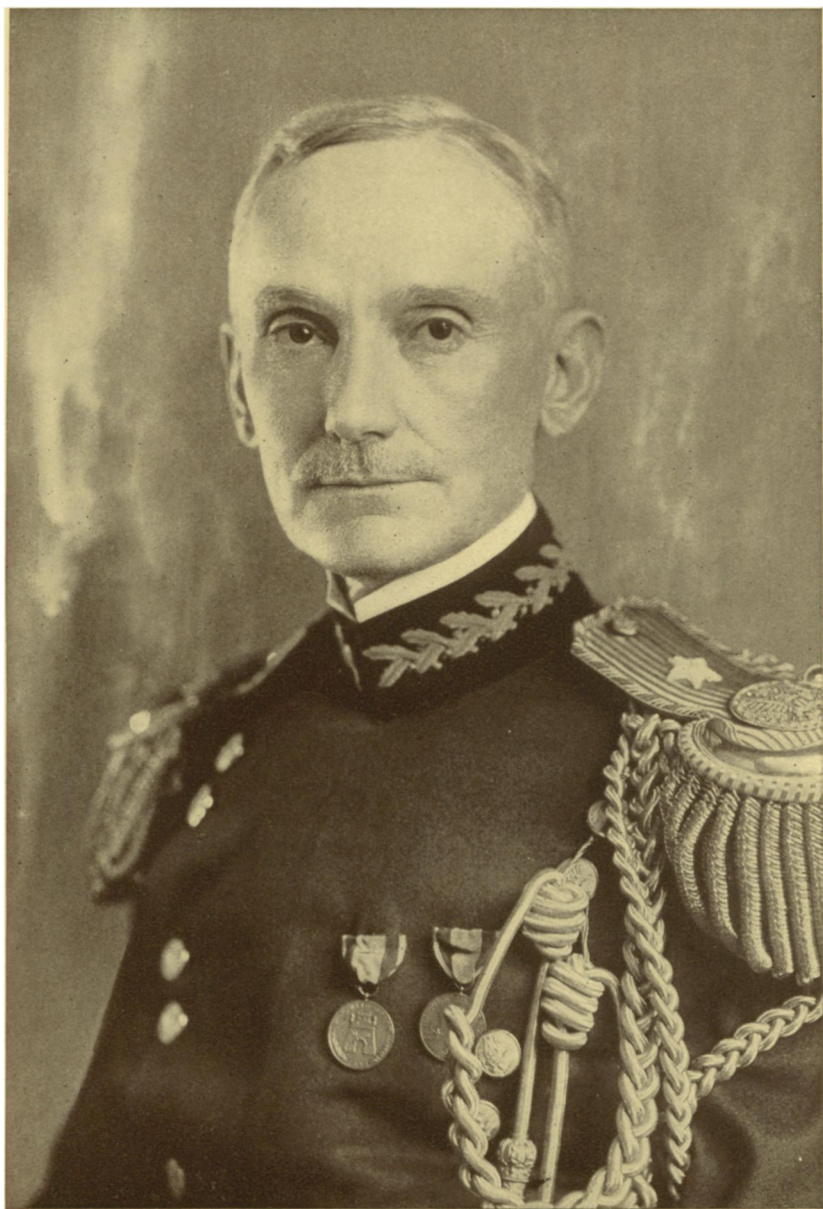
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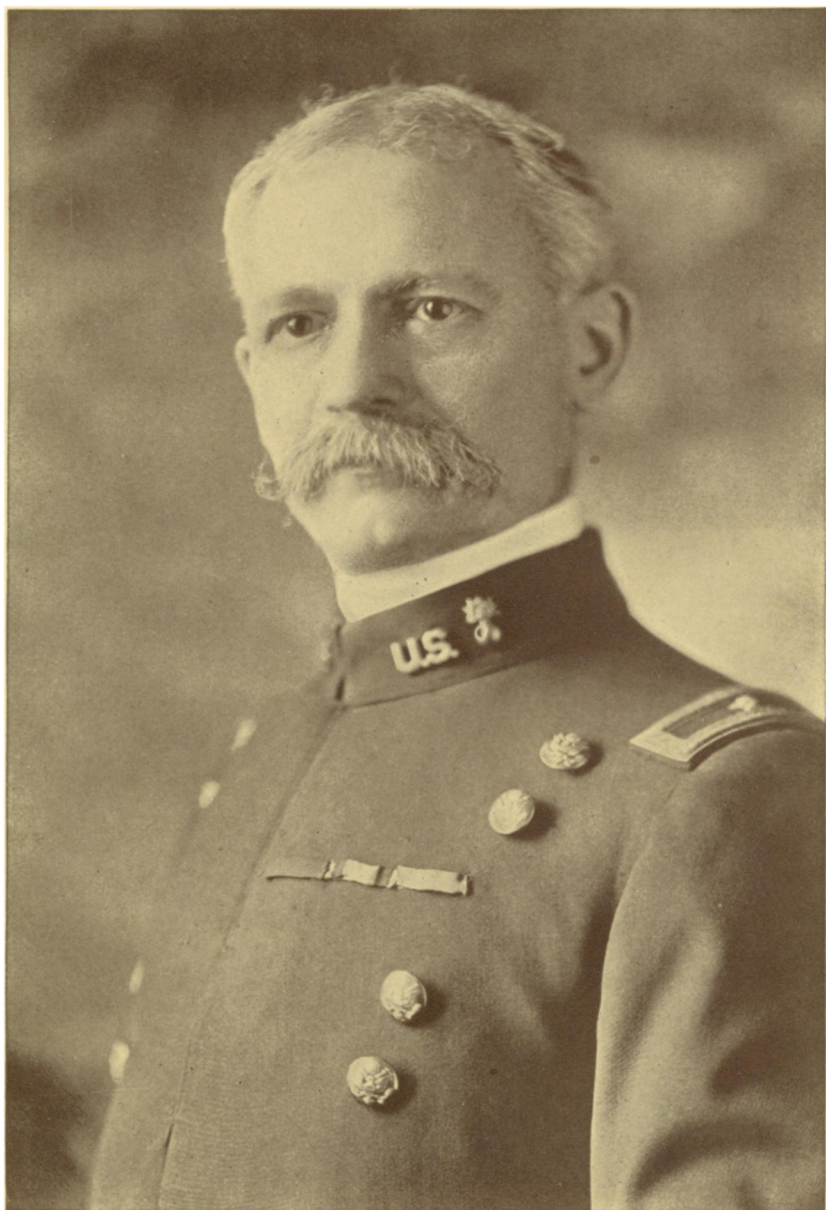
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